

The Human Services Commission approved these minutes on September 1, 2015

CITY OF BELLEVUE
HUMAN SERVICES COMMISSION
MINUTES

July 21, 2012
6:30 p.m.

Bellevue City Hall
City Council Conference Room 1E-113

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson McEachran, Commissioners Bruels, Kline, Villar

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Commissioner Mercer, Perelman

STAFF PRESENT: Emily Leslie, Alex O'Reilly, Joseph Adriano, Department of Parks and Community Services

GUEST SPEAKERS: Ellen Hegenauer, Catholic Community Services

RECORDING SECRETARY: Gerry Lindsay

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Chair McEachran who presided.

2. ROLL CALL

Upon the call of the roll, all Commissioners were present with the exception of Commissioners Mercer and Perelman, both of whom were excused.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. July 7, 2015

A motion to approve the minutes as submitted was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Villar and the motion carried unanimously.

4. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

5. STAFF AND COMMISSION REPORTS

Commissioner Villar said she met with Imagine Housing on July 17 to tour Andrews Glen.

Human Services Manager Emily Leslie reported that staff have been very busy

working on the Needs Update.

Human Services Planner Alex O'Reilly said the providers survey information has been very helpful, and there have been some additional community conversations conducted.

Chair McEachran asked about the information in the Eastside Pathways Community Scorecard and Ms. O'Reilly said information from that report has been used to inform the school aged and youth chapter of the Needs Update as well as some other sections. There is much going on with Eastside Pathways in general but also specifically in Bellevue. An internal team meets monthly to coordinate all efforts and at its August meeting the team will look to see how the work of the city aligns with the indicators selected for the Pathways report.

6. DISCUSSION

A. Harrington House Contract

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano called attention to the letter from Catholic Community Services regarding Harrington House and their request for consideration regarding the balance of the contract after the facility closes its doors.

Ms. Ellen Hegenauer, Harrington House Program Director, reported that the program will close as of August 31. She explained that all of the operating endowment for the program was used up by 2010. Time was spent over the last five years trying to reinvent the program and reduce costs. Staffing and expenses were reduced but not to a financially sustainable level. Catholic Community Services has had to cover the annual deficit and the agency is simply no longer able to do that. The cities of Bellevue and Redmond fund only six percent of the overall program budget, and fundraising efforts have not been able to fill the gap. Additionally, homelessness in general is moving away from transitional housing programs in favor of short-term and permanent housing options.

Ms. Hegenauer said Bellevue funds are currently used for case management, including life skills development. The case manager and the client work together to develop a service plan through a collaborative process.

The Commission was asked to consider using the remaining contract funds to continue supporting the families that left the Harrington House program to assure that they will be able to remain in stable housing. Many need rent and utility assistance. There are currently 20 active clients participating in what Catholic Community Services is calling the after care program, though by the end of August there will be 25 families in the program. It will cost about \$33,000 to provide case management to those families, 70 percent of which could come from the leftover funds from Bellevue and Redmond.

Ms. Hegenauer thanked the Commission for being a faithful donor to the program over the years.

Commissioner Kline asked if the 20 clients currently in the after care program moved into the program during the normal course of the program. Ms. Hegenauer said housing was found for four of the nine clients currently in the Harrington House program. Those four families moved out because they were ready to do so, but the other five clients have more difficult issues, making it more difficult to find housing for them. The practice of accepting clients into the program stopped at the end of February.

Commissioner Bruels asked if there was a wait list at the time Harrington House stopped accepting new referrals. Ms. Hegenauer said there was no wait list because the Family Housing Connection program serves as the hub for referrals. Calls are, however, received on a daily basis from families wanting to get into Harrington House, which is evidence that the need continues.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Kline, Ms. Hegenauer said closing Harrington House will create a hole in the services to the population that has utilized the service. The hope is that the regional homelessness initiative will make it easier for families to find housing, but the case management piece will be missing.

Ms. Leslie explained that the system is changing to come up with models in which families that need help for a little while only can find it. Some transitional housing stock will be retained to address families facing larger issues. The balance of the system will be focused on getting people to self-sufficiency as quickly as possible.

Chair McEachran said he was present at a Planning Commission meeting during which the Housing Element was discussed. Several residents of Harrington House provided testimony about the clear need for affordable housing options in Bellevue that will facilitate low-income persons in being able to live and work in, and be an essential part of, the Bellevue community.

Ms. Hegenauer said Catholic Community Services supervises a program that provides pregnancy and parenting support. In that program the parents are taught not to wait until they are homeless before calling for help. The intent is to connect the program with the after-care program within the organization.

Noting that Bellevue's share of the funds remaining on the contract is \$15,000, Commissioner Kline asked what those funds will be used for. Ms. Hegenauer answered that the after-care program will cease once the funds are gone. If approved, the funds will be used to continue services as work progresses to find new funding for the program.

Commissioner Villar asked how many staff will lose their jobs once Harrington House closes. Ms. Hegenauer said there are four regular staff, and several on-call staffers,

who will be losing their jobs. Those who lose their jobs will be able to apply for other jobs within the agency.

A motion to use the remaining \$15,000 from the 2015-2016 Harrington House contract for case management services as after care for clients that have been served in the Harrington House facility was made by Commissioner Villar. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bruels.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Kline, Ms. Hegenauer said seven of the after care clients live on the Eastside, and there currently are three residents who are thinking of staying on the Eastside.

The motion carried 3-1 with Commissioner Kline voting against.

7. DISCUSSION

A. Review of 2016 CDBG Applications

Grant Coordinator Joseph Adriano called attention to the matrix in the packet listing the applications and outlining the amounts previously recommended for each. He noted that the amount recommended for Jewish Family Service was based on the Commission's recommendation made in 2014, and that the balance, including a cost of living adjustment, was covered by the Human Services Fund.

Mr. Adriano noted that the Commission recommended a higher amount for A Regional Coalition for Housing (ARCH) relative to their 2015 allocation. ARCH director Arthur Sullivan was present at the previous Commission meeting to explain how the organization spends funds on projects.

The Bellevue Boys & Girls Club application relates to the ongoing architectural and design work that will be done as the agency builds its new clubhouse in the downtown. The agency was asked if it could spend more funds and the answer given was it could spend up to \$300,000 on the project in 2016.

Mr. Adriano said the proposed allocations for planning and administration are significantly lower than what the program received for 2015. He explained that the division's current projections for what the program can spend through the end of 2016 contributed to lowering the allocation.

The application from International Community Health Services relates to the renovation of the medical and dental clinic. When asked after the July 7 meeting, the agency indicated it could spend up to \$80,000 in 2016.

The initially proposed increase for the Senior Services Minor Home Repair Program over the 2015 allocation represents little more than a cost of living adjustment.

With regard to ARCH, Ms. Leslie reminded the Commissioners that timeliness continues to be an issue. The program was behind in spending its 2012, 2013 and 2014 funds, totaling \$158,902, and has promised to spend it all by September 30 by paying for an elevator at Bellevue Manor. Additionally, the program has \$68,900 from 2015 that has yet to be spent that will also be spent on the elevator. She said any additional funds allocated to the program should come with a requirement to know by January 2016 how the funds will be spent, and that the funds be spent by the end of 2016. There is a possibility that the funds will be able to be spent on the permanent winter shelter project but that has yet to come to fruition. ARCH will be putting out a new request for proposals in the fall of 2015 and that will make it known what projects are being added to the pipeline.

Commissioner Kline said one option would be to simply wait until there are viable projects on the books before giving ARCH any additional funds. Ms. Leslie reminded the Commissioners that at the previous Commission meeting the discussion focused on the fact that because affordable housing is such a huge issue, and a priority for the Council, funding ARCH makes sense. Commissioner Kline argued that it might make more sense for the Commission to fund projects that are ready and allocating more funds to ARCH once they are ready for them. Ms. Leslie said that easily could be the Commission's rationale.

Answering a question asked by Commissioner Kline about the Major Home Repair Program, Ms. Leslie said if they can spend at least \$25,000 per month through December 2016, they will be able to spend down their account balance. They have the clients but for various reasons they have not been able to get the jobs done and thus spend the money fast enough. Additionally, given that the housing market has heated up more people are selling their houses and paying back their loans, adding to the amount of money that must be spent.

Commissioner Kline suggested reducing to zero the funding for ARCH, reducing the Major Home Repair Program allocation to \$215,000, and increasing the Boys & Girls Club allocation.

Commissioner Villar commented that because the Major Home Repair Program has all the money it can spend, reducing its allocation makes sense. She also suggested that the program should not be called out as appropriate for additional funding in the contingency plan. Mr. Adriano said the language of the contingency plan could be written flexible enough to allow giving the program extra funds if they are available and if an assessment shows the program could in fact use more money.

The recommendation of the Commission was to award \$100,649 to Jewish Family Service; nothing to ARCH; \$182,076 to Bellevue Boys & Girls Club; \$26,828 to City of Bellevue CDBG Administration; \$92,096 to City of Bellevue CDBG Planning; \$215,000 to the Major Home Repair Program; \$80,000 to International Community Health Services; and \$78,351 to the Minor Home Repair Program.

There was agreement to incorporate language in the contingency plan to allow for flexibility in awarding additional funds should they become available, giving attention first to the Major Home Repair Program, second to the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club, and third to ARCH. There also was agreement to draft the contingency plan relative to a reduction in the CDBG allocation to first comply with the federal requirements regarding spending caps for public service and administration/planning activities, second to reduce the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club allocation, and third to reduce the allocations to the Major Home Repair Program, Bellevue Boys & Girls Club and International Community Health Services by equal percentages.

With regard to the rationale for not funding ARCH, the Commissioners agreed with the suggestion made by Ms. Leslie that language should be included that states the Commission recognizes the need for affordable housing in Bellevue, that the decision not to fund the program is predicated on the city's timely need to spend CDBG funds in accord with all federal requirements, and that the Commission will have the opportunity to consider a higher level of funding for ARCH in future funding cycles as specific projects within Bellevue are identified.

The Commissioners directed staff to include as rationale for funding the Bellevue Boys & Girls Club application language stating that the allocation is intended to build on the existing engagement the city has with the organization, and that the organization had communicated to the city its projected budget exceeds their initial funding request, thus they could expend additional funds. There also was agreement to include in the rationale for the Major Home Repair Program application language indicating the allocation amount is determined to some degree on the ability of the program to spend funds in a timely manner, and to note in the rationale for the International Community Health Service application that the agency had indicated to the Commission that the projected budget for their project exceeds their funding request and that they could expend additional funds.

A motion to approve the preliminary recommended allocations was made by Commissioner Bruels. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kline and the motion carried unanimously.

A motion to approve the preliminary contingency plan was made by Commissioner Kline. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Bruels and the motion carried unanimously.

8. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Leslie reminded the Commissioners that there would be no meetings during the month of August.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. O'Reilly said United Way will be meeting on August 3 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 at the downtown library to talk about their strategic plan. Agencies have been invited to attend and comment.

10. PETITIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS - None

11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair McEachran adjourned the meeting at 8:06 p.m.

Secretary to the Human Services Commission

Date

Chairperson of the Human Services Commission

Date